

The Rail Gunner Weekly

41st Fires Brigade



1-21 FA



2-20 FA



589th BSB



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JSS Aziziyah back in Iraqi hands



A Soldier from 2nd Company, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Iraqi Army Brigade, raises the Iraqi flag over JSS Aziziyah after the official signing over from American to Iraqi forces during a ceremony June 23.

Photo by Sgt. Allison Churchill, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

By Sgt. Allison Churchill
41st Fires Bde. PAO

Joint Security Station Aziziyah is now under Iraqi Army control after a ceremony at the JSS June 23.

Battery C, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, 172nd Brigade Combat Team handed the JSS over to 2nd Company, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Iraqi Army Brigade.

"This ceremony symbolizes the progress made over the past month," said Col. Dick Francey, 41st Fires Brigade commander and commander of American troops in Wasit province.

Francey said he had confidence the Iraqis would continue the security in the area.

"I know you will do wonderful things," said Francey.

"Insurgencies in the area have gone to the ground and they better stay down, or the Iraqi Army will take them down again."

The Cobra Battery Soldiers helped improve the living conditions on the JSS in their time there.

"We are very happy to receive this station," said Brig. Gen. Abed Gabr Mazloun, 32nd IA Brigade commander.

The Cobra battery Soldiers moved onto the JSS in March and improved the living conditions along with rotating Iraqi Army units.

Capt. Timothy Stephenson, Btry. C commander, signed the JSS over to Receivership Secretariat Sameer Al-Haddad, a representative of the prime minister.

This is the fourth JSS in Wasit province to be returned to Iraqi control; 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment Soldiers had manned three joint security stations after the departure of the Georgian Army in August 2008.

The last JSS, Combat Outpost Summers, currently manned by 1-77 FA Soldiers, is scheduled to be given back to the Iraqis later this month.

Operation 'Bring on the Docs' comes to an end

By Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson
41st Fires Bde. PAO

Soldiers from Task Force Gunner Med wrapped up Operation "Bring on the Docs" with a visit to the Jassan Health Clinic for a cooperative medical engagement June 23.

"It was great. The security was amazing; we had a great time working with the Iraqi physicians, meeting the pharmacists, talking to all the civilians and giving them good care," said Capt. Jason Smith, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 41st Fires Brigade.

"Bring on the Docs" started in August 2008 and was a joint medical civil-military operation between the Wasit Director General of Health and the 41st Fires Bde., designed to restore the medical capacity in Wasit and to bring clinics up to the regional health care standard.

Initially headed by Col. Italo Bastianelli, 41st Fires Brigade surgeon and taken over by Maj. N.I. Okpokwasili when Bastianelli redeployed, Task Force Gunner Med's approach to improving the health care in Wasit was multi-faceted.

The CME visits helped to identify each clinic's problems so the Iraqi healthcare system can fix those problems and bring the healthcare standards up to the same level as the other gulf region countries. Task Force Gunner Med identified ways that coalition forces could help with facility improvements at the clinics and hospitals.

Medical training was also conducted on FOB Delta for physicians and Iraqi Security Forces' medics to attend.

The last "Bring on the Docs" mission was a little less hectic than the previous CMEs as the doctors saw around 100 patients instead of the



Capt. Michael O'Leary, HHB, 41st Fires Bde., from Stephenville, Texas, checks a patient's eye during an examination at the last "Bring on the Docs" CME at the Jassan Health Clinic June 23.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

normal 250 to 300, said Smith, from Houston.

This last mission was also one of the medic's very first CME, and he says that it was a good experience for him, and he'll continue these types of missions if he can.

"I would like to continue it; it depends on what kind of support we get. If we have the proper support for it, I'll keep on doing it because I like stuff like this," said Sgt. Hiran Patel, 1st Battalion, 150th Assault Helicopter Battalion medic.

Both Patel and Smith were impressed with the operations at the Jassan Health Clinic.

"I think this clinic is in great shape; I got

to look through their pharmacy and they have a bunch of good medications; I got to work hand-in-hand with an Iraqi physician and she did an outstanding job seeing and treating people," said Smith.

"I just have a different comparison just coming over here; the biggest, toughest thing is the language barrier but they seem to be doing pretty well for themselves," said Patel, from New Brunswick, N.J.

Operation "Bring on the Docs" comes to a close after 11 months of missions as the 41st Fires Brigade gets ready to redeploy to Fort Hood, Texas.



Left: Capt. Jason Smith, HHB, 41st Fires Bde., from Houston, listens to an infant's breathing at the last "Bring on the Docs" CME at the Jassan Health Clinic June 23.



Right: Capt. Michael O'Leary (front), HHB, 41st Fires Bde., from Stephenville, Texas, and Sgt. Matthew Schenck, Co. C, 589th Brigade Support Battalion, from Archer City, Texas apply bandages to a patient who had cut off his tattoos in order to join the Iraqi Police at the last "Bring on the Docs" CME at the Jassan Health Clinic June 23.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

Deep Strike Soldiers say goodbye to orphans

By Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson
41st Fires Bde. PAO

Children from the Kut orphanage were treated to an evening of games, gifts and entertainment at the Rehanah Al-Haydaryah Family Park by Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment, 41st Fires Brigade June 26.

"It was an idea when we starting meeting with Lt. Col. Bush to have an event before the American forces left that they could say goodbye to the Iraqi children and it should be in an open area like the park," said Ms. Nisreen Abdul Raoof, the director of the Kut orphanage.

Lt. Col. Timothy Bush, 2-20 FA Regt., commander and the Deep Strike Soldiers have been working with the communities and Iraqi Security Forces throughout all of Wasit province from the Soldiers stationed at Joint Security Stations Mutanabe, Salaam and Ezdehar near the cities of Badrah, Numaniyah and Shaykh Sa'ad to orphanages and schools in Kut.

The orphans enjoyed an evening of performances by the 34th Infantry Division band and games including musical chairs, water balloon toss, three-legged race and soccer. Deep Strike Soldiers also supplied snacks, drinks and gifts for the event.

"Before we met with Lt. Col. Bush we had a bad picture of American forces because of the media, the propaganda; before they used to say the Americans were invaders and occupation forces, but after we met with them and talked with them, we found out that they have big hearts and are very human," said Nisreen.

"Especially Lt. Col. Bush; he has a big heart and he has helped us a lot. He gave us backpacks and soccer balls for the school and soccer balls and we gave them to the kids," added Nisreen.

The evening's events were wonderful for the kids and Soldiers said Nisreen, but the biggest gift that the American Soldiers gave to this area was the gift of democracy.

"I would like to send my regard to all American citizens and the American Army because they sacrificed a lot of Soldiers in Iraq to bring Iraq its democracy. We have free speech, we can say whatever we want, we have political freedoms and can say our opinion," said Nisreen.

"Right now we have stability and we have good security in this province with the help of the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi Police, so right now thanks to God we are living free, and living in a democracy and we will



Ms. Nisreen Abdul Raoof plays with an orphan at the Deep Strike farewell to the children of the Kut orphanage at the Rehanah Al-Haydaryah Family Park June 26. Nisreen said that they came up with the idea to have a farewell in the park so the American Forces could say goodbye to the children.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

always remember the Americans for helping us to set up the country like this," she added.

The Soldiers of 2nd Bn., 20th FA Regt., are winding down their time in Wasit province and Iraq as the 1st Bn., 77th FA Regt., 172nd Brigade Combat Team will soon take over the mission in Wasit Province.



Children circle around during a game of musical chairs at the Deep Strike farewell to the Kut orphanage at the Rehanah Al-Haydaryah Family Park June 26.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Thompson, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

Worship Opportunities Sunday

Chapel 1

Traditional Protestant	0900
Latter-day Saints	1030
Gospel Service	1300
Reconciliation service	1830
Catholic Mass (English)	1930

Monday

Chapel 1

Catholic Mass	0800
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Tuesday

Mayor Cell

Bible Study	1930
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Chapel 1

Bible Study	2000
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Thursday

TMC

Bible Study	1930
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Saturday

Chapel 1

Catholic Mass	0800
Christian Movie Night	2000

Nominations for St. Barb, Molly Pitcher awards due

By Sgt. Allison Churchill
41st Fires Bde. PAO

Planners for the 41st Fires Brigade's Saint Barbara's Day Ball are asking for nominees for the Order of Saint Barbara and Molly Pitcher Awards.

Nominees are due to Capt. Eric Robertson July 1, with the payment for the awards due July 15.

Nominees for both awards, as well as those submitting the nominations, need to be members in good standing of the United States Field Artillery Association.

No money is necessary to make a nomination; if the nomination is approved by Col. Dick Francey, brigade commander, Robertson will contact the nominating point-of-contact for payment.

Saint Barbara became regarded as the patron saint of those in danger of thunderstorms or fire due to legend that says her father, a pagan, was struck by lightning and killed shortly after killing Barbara for her Christian beliefs.

When gunpowder became available, artillerymen began asking Saint Barbara for protection from the explosions that occurred when cannons didn't properly fire.

Artillerymen inducted into the Honorable or Ancient Orders of Saint Barbara are expected to demonstrate high standards of morals, professionalism and contributions to field artillery.

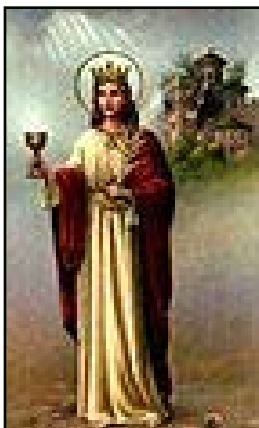
Molly Pitcher is the nickname given to Mary Hays McCauly, whose husband fought in the Battle of Monmouth, N.J., during the Revolutionary War.

During the fight, McCauly carried cool water from a nearby well to Soldiers and their guns. When her husband fell, she took his place at his cannon.

In her honor, the Molly Pitcher Award is given to individuals who voluntarily make a significant contribution to the field artillery community.

Nominations must be signed and follow the examples attached to FRAGO 275.

Historical information from the USFAA Web site.



Saint Barbara

Promotion reunites family



Newly promoted Capt. Eren Goodenough, of Montgomery, Ala., 41st Fires Brigade medical planner, receives a congratulatory pat on the back from her uncle, Col. Robert O'Connor, of Jackson, Minn., chief of governance, Multi-National Corps – Iraq, June 22 as he tells her colleagues that due to not seeing Goodenough since she was 12-years-old, he doesn't have any embarrassing stories to share.

Photo by Sgt. Allison Churchill, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

Mayor's Cell celebrates end of deployment

Top: Mayor's Cell and Garrison leadership present end-of-tour awards to the team of Soldiers who kept FOB Delta running smoothly during a ceremony at the Mayor's Cell June 26.



Bottom: The Force Protection team poses together after receiving their end-of-tour awards.

Photos courtesy of Capt. Theresa Piasta

